



Ethel Lee McPhail Thearp

September 14, 1918 - March 15, 2011

Ethel Lee McPhail Thearp, affectionately known as Gran to her family and friends, ended her 92-year wait here on earth and went home to heaven on March 15, 2011, at Sweetwater Hospital. All of her children and many of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren were with her during her final moments.

Ethel was a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, who raised her family to know and follow the Lord. From dedicated homemaker and quilter to amazing cook and friendly neighbor to all who knew her, she loved with exception and left lasting memories for her family. Many people have been blessed by the quilts that Ethel so lovingly created and willingly gave as gifts. Her life was truly an example of how we are to live. Ethel was preceded in death by her husband of fifty-one years, L.T. "Jack" Thearp, eldest son Jackie Thearp, infant son Leroy Thearp, daughter-in-law Catherine Thearp, great-grandson Jesse Thomas Latham, brothers Louis McPhail, Ralph McPhail, and Earl McPhail, and sister Vesta Peak.

She is survived by a large and loving family, including sons and daughters-in-law Jimmy and Stella Thearp of Niota, Troy and Linda Thearp of Sweetwater, and Albert and Jo-Ruth Thearp of Athens, daughter and fiancé Phyllis French and Larry Bembas of Maryville, daughter and son-in-law June and Tommy Latham of Philadelphia, daughter Gwen Jones and Tim Pitts of Louisville, and daughter-in-law Ellen Thearp of Niota.

She was blessed with twelve grandchildren, including: Sherry (and Donnie)

Sharp of Knoxville; Jody (and Polly) Knight of Memphis; Kenny (and Bonnie) Thearp of Sweetwater; Ted (and Amie) Thearp of Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia; Alex (and Cathy) Boatman of Pauley's Island, South Carolina; Jack (and Angi) Boatman of Dandridge; Tonia Latham of Maryville; Mark (and Kelly) Latham of Athens; Elizabeth (and Brian) Atkins of Etowah; Evan Jones of Maryville; Wendy (and Levi) Garrett of Paint Rock; Jason (and Tiffini) Thearp of Paint Rock; sister Irene Sneed of San Jose, California; brother and sister-in-law Kenneth and Pauline McPhail of Cleveland; a host of nieces, nephews and cousin; and a loving church family, including Michelle Holmes, who was faithful to visit and read to Ethel weekly.

Funeral services will be held on Friday, March 18, at 11 AM at Mount Pisgah Baptist Church, where Ethel was a member for decades, with Rev. Gerald Perry and Rev. Martin Bolin officiating. The body will lie in state from 10 AM to 11 AM on Friday at Mt. Pisgah. Burial will follow the funeral in the Mt. Pisgah Cemetery. The grandsons will serve as pallbearers. The family will receive friends on Thursday, March 17, from 6 PM to 8 PM at Kyker's Funeral Home, Sweetwater.

The family expresses great appreciation to Dr. Poston and the nursing staff on the 2nd Floor at Sweetwater Hospital for their dedicated care.

Tribute Wall

TT

“ We will miss Gran and her loving kindness to us. I knew her everyday of my life and never knew a harsh or unkind word. She was an example of what a life of following Christ should look like in my eyes.

I am glad that my wife and girls got to know her. She loved all without exception.

I am sad for us, but happy that she is at rest in glory.

I love you and will miss you.

Ted Thearp

Troy (Ted) & Amie Thearp - March 17, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JH

“ So sorry for your loss. Your family will be in my thoughts and prayers.

Jeremy & April Hembree - March 17, 2011 at 12:00 AM

GH

“ So sorry I could not be there in your time of sorrow. I remember how Aunt Ethel and Granny had so many memories together and how they shared so much during the later years. With all my love and prayers.

Gaye Daniels Hyde

Gaye Hyde - March 17, 2011 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ My thoughts and prayers are with you through this difficult time. Although I didn't know Mrs Thearp, I do know she must have been a dear soul as evidenced by her daughter, Gwen. I feel grateful to have Gwen as a colleague and a friend. Please let me know if I can do anything to support or assist you through this time.

Sharilyn Sage - March 17, 2011 at 12:00 AM

CD

“ Ethel was a wonderful friend to us. We will miss her dearly, but look forward to being with her in heaven. May God bless, comfort and strengthen the family in their time of grief.

Clayton & Frances Dunsmore - March 16, 2011 at 12:00 AM